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ART. II. — 1. *The Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles the Fifth.* By WILLIAM STIRLING, Author of Annals of the Artists of Spain. London: J. W. Parker & Son. 1852. 12mo. pp. 271.

2. *Correspondence of the Emperor Charles the Fifth and his Ambassadors at the Courts of England and France; from the Original Letters in the Imperial Family Archives at Vienna.* Edited by WILLIAM BRADFORD. London. 1850.

THE decay of calligraphy was a matter of continual vexation and complaint with scholars, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Instead of the clear and beautiful characters exhibited by the MSS. of the early monks, the copyists of that time scattered half-formed letters over the parchment, and made use of numerous and tortuous abbreviations, that overtasked the eyes of the reader, and distracted his attention. An exception was indeed made in favor of missals, and other works held in peculiar veneration, and often possessed by persons comparatively unlearned. But the pale student, who pored over his classical treasures, muttered many an imprecation when forced to pause in the midst of an ecstasy, and to gather, syllable by syllable, the glowing thoughts that his impatient mind would fain have plucked at a single grasp. A race of scribes, who received the appellation of *cursores*, were accustomed to dash across the page without raising the pen, leaving what seemed but a single long word in every line. No doubt, the blear-eyed enthusiast, whose only passion was the love of letters, was accustomed to expatiate upon the degeneracy of an age that dealt thus recklessly with the works of genius, every particle of which had once been regarded as a hallowed repository of truth. But the real significance of this deterioration at length became apparent. The copyist could no longer write so clearly, because he was compelled to write faster. The human mind had awakened from its long torpidity. Long-buried stores of literature were constantly dug up. New beams of light were glimmering here and there, that foretold a glory which should rival that of antiquity. There was a growing circle of readers; for knight and squire were beginning to hang up their battered arms, and

to cultivate the arts of peace. The bewildered scribes could no longer supply the demand for books. This was evident to John Guttenberg, who, in the middle of the fifteenth century, invented types, and thus enabled the copyist to rest from his labors.

It is from the invention of printing that we commonly date the close of the Middle Ages, and the commencement of the Modern Era. With what simultaneous activity, with what variety of development, did the human intellect start forward in its new career! A world was discovered and colonized; the bonds of ecclesiastical thraldom were broken; the nations of Europe were consolidated in the forms which they have since retained. The great literature of England, the great literature of Spain, the art of Italy, bloomed. No wonder that the sixteenth century — that age of busy fermentation, of fierce struggle between the Old and the New — should have great attractions for the student of history. The picturesque forms of chivalry still lingered on the scene, but the contending principles were the same that have struggled for the mastery ever since. Even at this day, therefore, any thing that illustrates the character of the man who, during the first half of that eventful century, occupied the most conspicuous station, will have interest for intelligent readers.

The public life of Charles the Fifth is one with which, in the main, the world is tolerably familiar. English readers derive their knowledge of it chiefly from the pages of Robertson, in whose stately periods the monarch glides along as through the mazes of a court minuet. Even the shuffling of the gouty foot is all but concealed; and, like the chamberlain of the Queen of Spain, who asserted that his mistress "had no legs," the dignified historian finds it hard to confess that his hero had a great toe. It is not probable that the career of Charles will ever be exhibited *in extenso*, by a writer who shall combine imagination with profound research. History is transacted fast, and written slowly. But the last few years have been fruitful of publications that throw light on the Emperor's personal qualities, and on certain parts of his career.

Born in 1500, Charles became a sovereign in his seventh year. At that early age, he inherited the Netherlands — the

workshop and the mart of Europe — with a people that excelled all others in wealth, industry, inventive genius, and general education. It was also a free people. Each province, each town, possessed its peculiar privileges, the safeguards of its manufactures and its trade, bought with the wealth of the burghers, and promptly defended with their blood. Here, therefore, Charles was a limited monarch. But in his seventeenth year, he came into possession of Castile and its dependencies, and also of Aragon, and united all Spain under a common sceptre. The authority he thus obtained was subject to scarcely any check besides that of opinion; for the charters of popular freedom, which formerly existed in different parts of the Peninsula, had lost their vitality; and the nobles, once almost independent, had been so tamed under the politic rule of Ferdinand, and the nobler influence of Isabella's feminine yet chivalric character, that, though still haughty beyond all others, and the most exclusive as a caste in Europe, they had raised loyalty to the level of a passion and a faith, thus saving their pride by the excess of their servility. The union of all the Spanish provinces under his sway, with their tributary golden world beyond the ocean, joined to the possession of the Low Countries, made Charles the most powerful sovereign of the age. But he had not yet reached the pinnacle of his greatness. He was destined to wear the highest secular title in Christendom, as well as to possess the greatest authority. In 1520, he received, by election, the imperial crown of Germany, and thus attained a rank which had not been united to dominions so vast and power so absolute since the reign of his great namesake, Charlemagne. He had not yet completed his twenty-first year.

Such was his splendid position. But the splendor existed for the world, as the sun's light exists for the universe over which it is diffused. For the orb itself, there is the daily march at "thunder speed," on its "appointed course." No life of empty magnificence awaited Charles. His power was real. He must act and govern. He had no "constitution" to do the work for him. It was impossible to shirk the labor or the responsibility. His task was before him; and the

important question in regard to him, as in regard to the meanest of us, is, How was that task performed? Nor was he insensible of the necessity which lay upon him. If his youth lasted longer than is usual, if he was submissive to the trammels of his minority, and displayed no eagerness to shake them off, so much the firmer and more self-reliant was his sway, when at length established. No personal influence existed near him; no stronger mind overruled his own. He took counsel of himself, was the author of his policy, and instructed his agents how to execute it.

His difficulties were many; but two great problems, in especial, awaited solution. He received the imperial crown at a time when the German people (as since, in our day) was striving to consolidate itself into a nation. The disorders throughout the Empire amounted almost to anarchy. Many years had been spent in devising plans for strengthening the federal union — for enlarging the central authority, yet making it more dependent on the collective members of the Empire, so that it might better represent the general feeling, and have a better claim to general support. The accession of a youthful prince was deemed auspicious; one who had given no hostages to the past might fearlessly encounter the future. Charles was not indifferent to the crisis; but, as was natural, he was inclined simply to aggrandize the imperial power — to establish order by gathering up all the reins of government in his own hands. And had he been able to effect this, he would have achieved all that was possible; he would have cut the knot. But the circumstances were too strong for him to master them; and the German Empire remained, what we believe it had been from the first, not a fact, but a mere idea. For the imperial system, as it seems to us, did not arise in Germany by any natural process of development, but was pedantically grafted upon the ancient Teutonic institutions. In form, it was an imitation of the Roman Empire; according to the theory, a continuation of it. It was called "the Holy Roman Empire;" and the title of "Cæsar" was preserved as the designation of the sovereign. In accordance with this notion, the Kaiser conceived himself to be the secular ruler of Christendom, the source of all temporal authority, just as

the Pope was the source of spiritual authority. The Papacy and the Empire were compared by the theorist to the sun and the moon. But, besides that it was not indigenous, the imperial power, we think, never rooted itself firmly in the German soil. It is true, that, in some few instances, a real and great authority was wielded, by men like Frederic Barbarossa, whose commanding talents bore down all opposition, and on occasions when temporary enthusiasm concealed the lack of unity and subordination. But, in general, these high-titled princes were powerful only as impediments to the establishment of power. Some of them passed almost their whole lives without the limits of the empire. Sometimes, for successive years, no single act was done by them, that testified their claim to be the rulers of the German people. Elections, depositions, struggles of rival claimants, strong appeals from all sides that the fact should be brought into accordance with the theory, and that a government which professed to be supreme should bring under its control the factions and classes that waged incessant war, — these things form the staple of the imperial history. The Empire was a legal fiction; and it is the great misfortune of Germany, that, for so many centuries, it was suffered to prevent the growth of healthy and natural institutions.

It is in connection with a far more important subject, that the policy of Charles will always continue to be studied. The Reformation, though generally regarded merely as a religious movement, had a twofold origin. It was not only an uprising of the common sense of Christendom against priestcraft, against formulas and dogmas, which had been heaped together until their absurdity was visible to all men; it was also an expression of that more earnest national spirit, which, everywhere in Europe, had been developed by the recent political revolutions. It had become intolerable that a foreign priest, with his bulls and rescripts, should control the acts and the career of an independent nation. In the Papacy lay at once the strength and the weakness of the Romish Church. Without it, the unity of the Church would be lost; but no ecclesiastical abuse was so open to general censure. During the Middle Ages, it had needed no bulwark. In times when there was

scarcely anywhere a state, but when everywhere there was the Church, the Papacy had been the great protector of the people against oppression and lawless violence, and in return, had been supported by the popular affection. But now, amidst the thunders of civil war, the system of rude force, of baronial anarchy, of *faust-recht* and *vehm-gericht*, had made its exit. National self-consciousness now cemented together the various classes that had hitherto been connected only by the inefficient bands of feudal allegiance; and this sentiment was outraged by the pretensions and exactions of the Pope. If, in Germany, this spirit of "nationality" had hitherto been unable to embody itself in appropriate institutions, so much the more vehement was the opposition to a system that was itself one of the chief obstacles to the accomplishment of that endeavor. The existing authority of the Pope was incompatible with the establishment of a more united government or a firmer imperial sway. Several of the electoral princes were ecclesiastics. A large portion of the country was under the direct dominion of bishops and abbots, as lords of the soil. By means of *annates*, fees of investiture, and other contrivances for spiritual extortion, the papal government obtained from Germany a revenue immeasurably greater than any supplies which the Diet could be induced to vote for the general expenses of the Empire. It is not strange, therefore, that the German people should have entertained the hope that Charles would be led, by his own instincts, to concur in the demand for a great ecclesiastical reform. The circumstances of his education made this opinion appear still more reasonable. He was the countryman and the contemporary of Erasmus. He had been growing to manhood at a time when the keenest intellect and the happiest wit were directing an incessant fire against the more vulnerable points of the ecclesiastical system; and yet, as the faith itself had not then been assailed, no alarm had been taken by the orthodox, and no effort had been made to fortify the creed of the young sovereign with a triple wall of bigotry, that should defy all assaults of reason.

In looking at the course which Charles actually took, in regard to the Reformation, we are struck, at the outset, by the

fact that he quite underrated the importance of the movement. It is not strange that his own mind should have been unaffected by its spiritual influence. But a great statesman — and such Charles is usually considered — would have seen but one of two courses to take at this critical moment. Such a ruler would either have acknowledged the necessity of a change, and controlled the revolution by putting himself at its head; or he would have exerted all his endeavors to crush it in the germ. But Charles did not see this necessity for prompt and decisive action. He was on the eve of a great struggle with France, by which he hoped to regain the Italian provinces that, by conquest or cession, had, in times of weakness, been severed from the Empire. In this contest, it was of the utmost importance to him to secure the alliance of the Pope. He consented, therefore, to the condemnation of the Lutheran heresy by the Diet; and Leo, in return, joined him in a secret treaty for the expulsion of the French from Italy. But the Emperor was far from taking any active measures for suppressing the reform. He looked to ulterior consequences, and saw, in the continuance of the division, sources of future profit. As the papal government reaped no advantage from the war, which Charles carried on with such vigor and success as led to the general belief in Europe that he aspired to universal dominion, a rupture soon occurred between the allies. Clement VII. complained that, instead of gaining new territory, the States of the Church had been more closely clipped by the Emperor's ambitious hand; and he transferred his support to the other party. Hereupon Charles began to see the necessity for ecclesiastical reform. He consented to abrogate the penalties which, by the Edict of Worms, had been attached to the profession of the new doctrines. He listened to the representations of those who insisted on the necessity of a compromise between the old opinions and the new. While the dread apparition, which he had undertaken to lay, was thus suffered to raise its threatening form in the background, Charles administered more directly a lesson to the pontiff that could not fail to make a lasting impression. An imperial army marched against the Holy City — an act of sacrilege which had not been witnessed since the irruption of

the barbarians. Rome was taken and sacked; the untold wealth of its shrines became the spoil alike of the German Lutheran and the Spanish Catholic. And Christendom rose not to avenge the outrage — only looked on with silent wonder. Thus it was made apparent that those foundations of popular faith on which the Papacy had once stood were undermined — that, as an independent power, the Papacy was extinct. Thenceforth it must lean for support on the great princes whose authority it had so often abased. It must become dependent, and a state of dependence is a state of servitude. Its policy could no longer spring direct from the Vatican, but must be dictated at Vienna, at Paris, at Madrid. Such was the condition in which the revolutions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries left that pontifical throne, whose occupants had once boasted that they were regarded throughout the West as "gods upon earth." The successes of Jesuitism did not restore the ancient authority of the Pope. It is not by a comparison based on the respective numbers of their adherents that the relative condition of the two great creeds — Catholicism and Protestantism — can be ascertained. As well compare the corpse which corruption has not yet resolved into its elements with the living man. The limbs are there, but the breath is wanting. The papacy is dead. Vain have been all efforts to reimbue it with vitality. Paul the Fourth, that "old man of high designs," was powerless to wield the thunderbolts of Hildebrand. And in our own days, the good Pio Nono, striving to reëstablish the mild, apostolic rule of the early pontiffs, to rally the affections of the people around an obsolete idea, to restore the simple faith and pious unity of primitive times, met with such success as is fresh in our recollections.

It is the fine remark of a writer of exquisite genius, that "amongst the qualities of a great man, success is one of the greatest." But we ought not to attribute this quality to a statesman until we have before us the sum of his achievements. We cannot judge him by a single enterprise, however fortunate the issue. From a single book, or a single picture, we may estimate the genius of the author or the artist. Each work of theirs is a whole, standing in no relation of cause or

effect to any other production of the same mind. But in politics, each separate measure is but part of a work that is still in progress; we see the creation in its successive stages; but we ought to suspend our censure until the general design has become apparent, and the fitness of the parts can be determined. But it is not so that the impatient multitude judges. It raises the loud acclaim, when the runner has but made a gallant start; it presses the laurels on his brow, when his overtasked energies are about to succumb. The prosperity which attended Charles the Fifth in his war with Francis, and in all the struggles for supremacy in Italy, made an impression upon his contemporaries which now fills the student with amazement. He was placed among the Cæsars and the Alexanders — among men whose deeds are the wonder of all time. At this altitude posterity has not allowed him to remain. After all his achievements, his career ended in failure and defeat, and these reverses had their origin in the incoherent nature of his policy. In the conduct of a particular enterprise, his abilities were unmatched. But his plans were inconsistent. His successes, instead of confirming, neutralized each other. No man could see more clearly the means to a given end; none could be blinder to the ultimate results. He had, in fact, no general principles of action; he was guided by no firm convictions; all he thought of was the present advantage. We do not design to fall into the cant that condemns a regard to expediency as a sacrifice of what is right. Expediency is the rule by which a statesman limits his aims and shapes them for practical fulfilment. But it cannot take the place of principles and ideas. A man who has no creed, no convictions of his own, no object except to float on the current in whatever direction it may bear him, will have as little success in the long run as the conceited theorist, who refuses to bate a jot of his darling scheme, and scorns the "base degrees" by which alone it is possible to ascend. In the Netherlands, Charles was an unrelenting persecutor; heresy was dangerous to the civil power as well as an offence against heaven; and by a nicely regulated scale of punishments, the heretic, according to the degrees of his guilt, was either beheaded, or burned, or buried alive. In Germany,

where the tendency of the new doctrines was favorable to the growth of the imperial power, and where the papal pretensions came into direct collision with those of the sovereign, the movement was winked at or encouraged. In Italy, where the head of the Church resisted the yoke that Charles sought to impose on him, a ruthless horde was let loose upon the metropolis of Christendom, and suffered to insult the ministers and the ceremonies of the ancient faith. Thus Charles fed the flame on one side, while he strove to quench it on the other. Had he resolutely opposed the Reformation in Germany at the outset, such opposition could not have been without effect. In his retirement at Yuste, he regarded it as the mistake of his life that he had respected the safe-conduct which he gave to Luther. There can be little doubt that this opinion was correct. Had he followed the example of Sigismund, the result would, in all probability, have been even more disastrous to civilization than the martyrdom of Huss. Had a civil war ensued, Charles, at that early stage, must have gained an easy victory, and with permanent results. He could not, indeed, have reëstablished the Romish Church upon its old foundations. It could never again, as in its palmy days, have enlisted in its service all the highest and purest souls of the age. But the Reformation would have been crushed; freedom and knowledge would have been crippled at their start; ages might have elapsed before another Luther rose to break the chains of nations. Northern Europe might, like southern Europe, have been locked fast in the embrace of superstition; Prussia might now be sleeping, as Italy sleeps; and England, like her great rival, Spain, might have sunk into imbecility. But Charles — not, as he flattered himself, from a too scrupulous regard for his plighted word, but from motives of near-sighted policy — suffered the arch-heretic to go free, and turned away his eyes from the havoc that light was making in the old domain of darkness. He felt, afterwards, that he had even been in some danger of conversion; and congratulated himself, with the shuddering joy of one who has escaped an imminent peril, that he had refused a personal hearing to the Protestant leaders. "These heretics," he said, "are always prepared with arguments, and

those so plausible, that a man might easily be deceived by them;" — an expression which makes us suspect that a doubt had crept into his mind, and not without difficulty been stifled.

However this may have been, Charles, for his own purposes, dallied and temporized, and could not be induced to strike with a bold hand at the assailants of the Church. With inconceivable rapidity, therefore, the new doctrine spread on every side. The Protestants of Flanders and Holland could not despair of obtaining religious liberty, when they saw their German neighbors, descendants of the same Teutonic ancestors, subjects of the same supreme sovereign, in the full enjoyment of that blessing. Throughout the length and breadth of Germany, the dogmas and ceremonies of the ancient Church were swamped by the irresistible torrent. The mass was discontinued, or performed in empty churches. Whole populations had become Protestant, that were subsequently reconverted by the exertions of the Jesuits. In the middle of the sixteenth century, it was computed that, in the Austrian States, only one thirtieth of the inhabitants adhered to the ancient creed. Nine tenths of the German people had abandoned the faith of their fathers. At length, the Emperor's eyes were opened. He had gained all the objects he had proposed to himself in tolerating dissent; the task now remained of healing the breach. It soon became apparent that this was not to be effected by negotiation or compromise. An appeal to arms was unavoidable. As usual, when Charles had determined on the course to be pursued, his action was prompt, and attended with immediate success. But this victory was fatal to him. The fermentation of parties and ideas, that had so long been going on, subsided. All the elements of opposition united. Germany proclaimed, with one voice, that the hour was gone by when it was possible to fetter thought. Without a single blow, the question was decided. Like a thief detected in the fact, the Emperor fled to an obscure refuge. His power in Germany, once so great, was totally wrecked. The Protestant Reformation reached a secure haven.

But let us turn from the defects which disqualify Charles,

as we conceive, for a place among great rulers, to the remarkable merits which he displayed in conducting his government, in the transaction of business, and in the prosecution of whatever schemes he undertook. It was his first great principle, from which he never for a moment swerved, to keep in his own hands the entire direction of affairs; to be in fact, what he was in name, the sole ruler of his dominions. He made himself acquainted with all important details of information regarding the internal condition of his own states, and of those with which he maintained diplomatic relations. Such information he was willing to receive from every trustworthy source. But he seldom asked for advice; when he did, it was of men so accustomed to act at his dictation, that they merely echoed his sentiments, or assisted in making clear to him the sequence of his own thoughts. Before acting, he pondered long and silently; when the decision had been arrived at, he was inflexible. If scruples arose, he dismissed them; it was then too late to doubt. Thus, not only was every step he took the result of ideas originated by his own mind, but it was clear to all the world that this was so. No man could flatter himself that any suggestion of his had had much weight in the royal deliberations. It is the more remarkable that Charles should have preserved this independence and undivided sway, since, left an orphan at an early age, he had for many years been the ward of powerful vassals; and it is seldom that a long minority does not leave a prince with his hands weakened by faction, or the approaches to his ear obstructed by favoritism. But these, Charles well knew, were the two great besetting evils of absolute government, tending not only to intolerable oppression of the people, but to the utter subversion of the royal authority. "Suffer no parties to be formed in your council," was the advice he privately gave to Philip, when appointing him regent of Spain. "Let it be well understood that all your servants must live together as brethren, without animosities and without partialities. Put yourself in no one's hands; treat of affairs with all, but do not connect yourself peculiarly with any. Otherwise it will be said that you are governed, and that you yourself know not how to govern. Such a report is in itself a great evil;

how much greater an evil that it should be well founded!" Above all, Charles steadily followed up that system of depressing the influence of the aristocracy, by which, in Spain, under Ferdinand, in France, under Louis XI., in England, under Henry VII., absolute monarchical government had been firmly established. The great nobles received from Charles appointments in his household; they were the generals of his armies, and the viceroys of his provinces. They were invested with pompous titles, with ribands and badges, and all the glittering distinctions that impose upon the world. But it was seldom that they obtained any real share in the civil administration, or were admitted among those confidential agents who aided the royal deliberations, and were intrusted with the secrets of the state. "The Duke of Alva," said the Emperor to his son, "is the best soldier and the best statesman in the kingdom. Yet I have not given him a place, as he desired, in the council. I have laid it down as a rule to admit no grandee, and therefore I have excluded him. Treat him with all consideration; honor him, favor him, make use of him. But suffer neither him nor any other grandee, neither an individual nor a faction, to gain a large share of your confidence, or to exercise an influence in your cabinet. The nobles have great thoughts of themselves. Under a seeming humility, they mask high aspirations. Beware of them, or it will cost you dear." *

In fact, the persons whom this sagacious prince habitually summoned to his closet were of humble origin, men whose fortune was entirely dependent on the favor of their master, and who had little to gain by consulting any will but his — priests and lawyers, who looked for the solid rewards of benefices and sinecures, and who had no ambition to appropriate to themselves such a share of external dignity as might give umbrage to their sovereign. These men were indeed servants, (*criados*) *creatures*. It was his smile that warmed them into life; and their sole desire was, that the source of those vivifying beams might ever increase in size and splendor. Such machinery could not fail to work smoothly. What a contrast did the government of Charles present to that of France,

* *Seminario Erudito*, tom. XIV.

where the hereditary animosities of great families and great factions continually impeded the wheels; and to that of England, where the court favorite and the haughty noble played a game for almost absolute power, and, if unsuccessful, paid their stake upon the scaffold.

Trained under such a master, it is not strange that the Spanish statesmen of the sixteenth century maintained a high and peculiar reputation. They did not, indeed, possess that kind of merit which, at the present day, and under free governments, confers the highest lustre upon men in public life. No scheme for improving the condition of the people — by promoting education, or commercial enterprise, or more equal legislation, or a better administration of justice — is connected with any of their names. These things, in fact, were not demanded of them. But they excelled in all those arts which, in their own day, constituted statecraft. None more adroit than they in wringing the last possible *maravedi* from the soiled hand of overtaxed labor; none more fertile of schemes to "keep the machine a-going," as their own expressive phrase was, when so clogged with debts that, to common eyes, national bankruptcy seemed inevitable; none bolder in devising measures for restraining "that wicked animal, the people," within necessary bounds. As negotiators, they were, perhaps, unrivalled. Diplomacy has always been held in higher estimation on the Continent of Europe than among the Anglo-Saxons, with whom it consists in making philanthropic protests when the "rights of man" are supposed to be assailed, and in sending ships of war to obtain prompt redress for any invasion of their own rights. But the sixteenth century was the golden age of diplomacy. The most trivial treaty could not be negotiated without such consummate displays of finesse, such laborious efforts of the parties to overreach one another, that a minister plenipotentiary of the nineteenth century, who should cast a retrospective glance on their operations, would be as much amazed as a child in watching the tricks of a juggler. Dissimulation was then the all-important requisite for success in public life. To dissemble on every occasion, whether treating with enemies or with allies, with a stranger or with a colleague — to conceal the real design, to gain

the end by any but direct means — was the universal practice, and in its perfection the summit of political art. It was the panoply of the statesman — of the patriotic as well as of the selfish, of the noblest no less than of the meanest. Charles himself was a finished dissembler. Philip II. would have been uneasy if his most simple and innocent thoughts — if he ever had such — had been known to any one besides his confessor. But the most profound master of this science was a man greater than either Charles or Philip, endowed with a higher genius than theirs, and with a nobility of soul and a liberality of view that were wholly foreign to their natures — William, Prince of Orange, called "the Silent," who stood by the council-board of the Emperor while a boy, and afterwards wrested from the tyrannical sway of his patron's son one of the fairest of his realms.

Excellence in such arts as these presupposes a keen insight into character. Charles the Fifth did not exhibit any profound knowledge of human nature in the abstract; but he was thoroughly acquainted with the designs, the motives, and the disguises of the ordinary denizens of a court. He knew how to baffle dangerous ambition, and to keep alive the meaner hopes of serviceable men. A niggard as regarded solid favors, he was liberal, yet discriminating, in the distribution of his smiles. He neither treated men as if they were his equals, nor, like Philip, as if they were all equally his inferiors. As he pressed the hand of an electoral prince, he raised his hat; while a smile and a nod acknowledged an old acquaintance in a lower position. Perhaps he had originally a kind heart; for high courtesy, though in a great degree the result of culture, can hardly be grafted on a hard or sour disposition. But it is the misfortune of men born to exalted rank, that every smile or word of theirs, instead of meeting, as among equals, with the careless, free response that nature prompts, is received as a favor and acknowledged with gratitude, and becomes a matter of pride and a matter of envy, like a jewel, or a woman's love. Things so precious must not be dropped at random. Impulse is therefore degraded into a system — is checked or forced, as the occasion demands; or rather, genuine emotion is lost, and replaced by a counterfeit.

However, it takes a very nice ear to perceive that these "sweet bells are jangled, out of tune, and harsh." Not every man has the cool reason of Sir Thomas More, and feels, when a Harry the Eighth leans familiarly on his shoulder, that "if my head would win him a castle in France, it should not fail to go." An affable prince, though his heart be as hard as the nether millstone, will be faithfully served, aye, and truly loved, by men who get neither solid rewards nor sincere affection in return. Charles the Fifth was popular among a people whose rights he disregarded, and whose gains he continually extorted; and he was beloved by servants whom he valued only for their use, and whose parsimonious wages were always in arrear. His gracious demeanor seemed to mitigate his despotism, and to amplify his bounty. In short, he was a thorough man of the world, and knew how to obtain solid profits from mere imaginary investments. In the business of common life, he would have been eminently prosperous. Born in poverty, he would have acquired great wealth; from obscurity, he would have climbed to a high station. But he was placed in a position which demanded higher qualities than those that ordinarily insure success. To conduct the affairs of a great empire, in times of danger and perturbation, requires that a man should be possessed of great and enlightened ideas; and here he was deficient. To maintain a sure footing in the midst of a moral revolution, high moral principle is a necessary support; and of moral principle we have found no evidence that Charles possessed an iota.

In his fifty-seventh year, the Emperor resigned his crown, and retired to the seclusion of a convent. This extraordinary action threw a halo of romance around the close of his career that has not yet been dissipated. It is related that he formed the design of abdicating many years before he executed it. This is not very improbable; such intentions have, no doubt, been often entertained by kings in seasons of anxiety and danger. The wearied statesman talks forever of exchanging the burdens of office for freedom and repose. The singularity in Charles's case lies not in the purpose, but in its fulfilment. Yet when we consider how he had been shattered by the storms of state, and that, in every part of the horizon, there

were threatening indications of a greater tempest, we may incline to the opinion that his abdication was less the result of choice than of a political necessity. How melancholy was his condition, physical and mental, in his latter years! At fifty, he was already worn out. He had been slowly developed; but his constitution does not seem to have been a bad one. It endured without injury the exposure and fatigue of the chase and the campaign. But it was not sufficiently tough to bear up under the inflictions of gluttony; and this lord of two worlds could find no substitute in the way of enjoyment for that which four full meals, of highly seasoned and unwholesome food, afforded every day. The flying visits of disease, which naturally ensued, were at first repulsed by medical skill or the efforts of nature. But at length gout, asthma, and dyspepsia advanced in a phalanx, and laid close siege to his frame. A deep gloom, the taint of which was hereditary in his blood, settled on him as his fortunes sank and his health deteriorated. His habits and condition at this period may be closely viewed through the medium of familiar letters written by his attendants, and other authentic documents, some of which have been lately printed. We are admitted to the presence of Charles when he has become an object of pity, and even of contempt. He is no longer able to hide those miserable contradictions which community of nature make us loath to pry into. They burst forth like a foul eruption. Sometimes he seems sinking into imbecility—the fate of his unfortunate mother. For weeks and months, he will not even put his signature to a necessary document. He makes little carts, on which to wheel himself about his garden, or sits for hours listening to the jests of a buffoon. In fits of remorse, he applies the saving scourge to his shoulders, until it is sprinkled with blood; or watches alone at midnight, in a chamber hung with black, and imagines that he hears his mother's voice calling him. Yet he must still have a capon stewed in milk brought to him at five in the morning, in the interval of his slumbers; and anchovies, and similar dainties, still form a portion of his evening repast. The cooks are at their wits' end to devise sufficiently unwholesome dishes, to the number of twenty, for his noonday meal. At night, "stuffed with

distressful bread," he cannot sleep; so listens with avidity — "*libenter et avide*" — to portions of Scripture read to him by poor Van Male; and is especially interested by the passages in the Prophet Esdras, which foretell the consummation of the world. At times, indeed, he rouses from his lethargy, and labors with his old energy and confidence. But these are fitful gleams, and the day that has been "so fair and foul" is hastening to its close.

Such was his state, bodily and mental. Let us now glance at the difficulties of his position. It almost seems as if he ceased to be a monarch long before his abdication; as if that act were but his own acknowledgment that the sceptre had slipped from his grasp. "Germany had cast him off," to use the expression of a Venetian minister of the time. If he still lingered within the borders of the Empire, the active control of its affairs was already exercised by Ferdinand. The Italian provinces, some of them new acquisitions, were threatening revolt. In 1555, Giovanni Pietro Caraffa ascended the papal throne; a man who carried thirty more years upon his shoulders, and yet was younger than Charles; a man of narrow mind, daring conceptions, inflexible will; whose soul was filled with the idea of reforming the discipline and reëstablishing the authority of the Church; who aimed at building up a great ecclesiastical state in Italy, and thus restoring the independence of the Papacy, which heresy, internal corruption, and the treachery and ambition of the Emperor had conspired to overthrow; who hated the Spaniards with the twofold hatred of a churchman and a patriot; who remembered the free republics, which, like the notes of a perfect chord, had in his youth constituted a united Italy, and who had witnessed the storming of the Vatican by the imperial troops; who, while a cardinal, had openly displayed his hostility to Charles, and whose first step, after assuming the tiara, was to enter into an alliance with France. With the latter power Charles was again at war, but no longer with his old success. He did not display the daring that had once characterized his operations in the field; his army manœuvred, and at length abandoned in despair the disastrous siege of Metz. The Netherlands — his native land, where alone he felt himself at

home, where alone he was beloved — were growing fretful under the sway of a prince who incessantly demanded new taxes, and too often disregarded old privileges. In spite of a ruthless persecution, the new religion was gradually leavening the mass of the population. "I see a new state of feeling growing up in these provinces," wrote Mary of Hungary, from Brussels; "such an irreverent disposition towards both God and the king, that I should not wish to continue in the regency even were I a man, and of great ability, much less being but a weak woman." *

Spain remained tranquil and intact. But, in regard to its government, a somewhat singular state of things existed. Charles had not visited that country since 1543. He had then established Philip as regent, and given him ample powers. That prince was as precocious as his father had been tardy in development. In his seventeenth year, he was already a husband, a father, and a ruler. He had, in fact, never known a boyhood. Laced round, as in an iron corset, by bands of religious bigotry, royal bigotry, and court-etiquette bigotry, his soul was cramped and dark. But he inherited much of his father's ability in transacting business, though none of his skill in winning golden opinions. He had not Charles's fire and rapid execution; but he had greater industry, greater perseverance, and an inflexible consistency in his aims, which made him formidable even when defeated. His path was tortuous, but it led to the goal; and he never wandered from it, never grew weary, never desponded; no reverse could cast him down, no temptation lead him aside. Like William of Orange, a profound dissembler; like William, too, he was no hypocrite. Each was honest and devoted in his purpose, and unscrupulous in the means for its accomplishment. Both were successful — one in creating, the other in destroying. The heroism of William saved Holland from the fate of Spain, the sources of whose national life were poisoned by the miasmatic policy of Philip. The instructions which Charles had given to his son, when investing him with the regency, related to the mode of conducting the administration, not to the particular measures with which he would have to deal.

* *Papiers d'État du Cardinal de Granvelle*, tom. IV. p. 476.

Nor have we been able to find any evidence that the Emperor, during that period of triumph and disaster, when Germany demanded all his thoughts, took an active part in the direction of affairs in Spain. It was natural that Philip, with the qualities and the talents we have mentioned, should think himself sufficient for all demands upon the government. The state which he maintained was equal to that of his father; and his household was formed in the Burgundian mode, and on the most magnificent scale. Thus established at Valladolid, *el Principe* must have seemed to the nation a more direct source of authority than *el Rey*, who was sailing up and down the distant Rhine. The very qualities, too, which, everywhere else in Europe, made Philip detested, gained for him in Spain a degree of respect and admiration which in that country was never entertained for "Charles of Ghent." A Spaniard by birth, Philip was wholly a Spaniard in character. He was noted for the extent to which he carried the national stoicism of demeanor — the *sosiego*, a haughty calmness amid discordant opinions and turbulent fortunes. Though he did not neglect his father's advice as to the means for preserving his authority, yet we find him — at least in the beginning of his career — much more inclined than Charles had been to favor the Spanish nobility. His first ministry was composed of grandees, who were also the great officers of his household, some of whom had been his companions and attendants from childhood. Thus the position of Philip in 1555 was very different from the usual position of an heir-apparent. He had conducted the government during several years, in which his mind had become mature and his experience ample; the nobility clustered around him as their head, and the people had a high opinion of his capacity. Under these circumstances, to have deprived him of the regency would have almost seemed like the deposition of a reigning sovereign. True, he had, by his marriage with Mary Tudor, in 1554, become the King of England; but his ambition could only have been tantalized by authority so cautiously granted and so jealously watched. While in England, we find Philip sending over Ruy Gomez to Brussels, to arrange with the Emperor which of them should assume the government of

Spain, and which that of the Low Countries; how the council of state should be formed, and on what plan the general administration of the various states should be settled.* Thus the prince appears in the active exercise of power, as a coördinate ruler, with Charles. But whatever arrangement had been made, the authority of the Emperor must soon have diminished; that of Philip would have continually increased. It was not unwise in Charles to execute the scheme on which he had pondered so long.

The spot selected by Charles, as the home of his remaining days, was the Vera, or Valley, of Plasencia, in the north-east corner of the province of Estremadura. He had some additions made to the conventual buildings of Yuste — a Jeromite monastery — for the accommodation of himself and his personal attendants. Mr. Stirling describes the place, both from the accounts given by those who saw it three centuries ago, and his own inspection of it in 1849.

"Backed by the massive south wall of the Church, the building presented a simple front of two stories to the garden and the noontide sun. Each story contained four chambers, two on either side of a corridor, which traversed the structure from east to west, and led at either end into a broad porch, or covered gallery, supported by pillars and open to the air. Each room was furnished with an ample fireplace, in accordance with the Flemish wants and ways of the chilly invalid. The chambers which look upon the garden were bright and pleasant; but those on the north side were gloomy, and even dark, the light being admitted to them only by windows opening on the corridor, or on the external and deeply shadowed porches. Charles inhabited the upper rooms, and slept in that at the north-east corner, from which a door, or window had been cut in a slanting direction into the church, through the chancel wall, and close to the high altar. The Emperor's cabinet, in which he transacted business, was on the opposite side of the corridor, and looked upon the garden. From its windows, his eye ranged over a cluster of rounded knolls, clad in walnut and chestnut, in which the mountain dies gently away into the broad bosom of the Vera. Not a building was in sight, but a summer-house peering above the mulberry tops at the lower end of the garden, and a hermitage of Our Lady of Solitude, about a mile distant, hung upon a rocky height, which rose like an isle out of the sea of forest. Immediately below

* *Papiers d'État du Cardinal de Granvelle*, tom. IV. p. 450.

the windows, the garden sloped gently to the Vera, shaded here and there with the massive foliage of the fig, or the feathery boughs of the almond, and breathing perfume from tall orange trees, cuttings of which some of the friars, themselves transplanted, in after days vainly strove to keep alive, at the bleak Escurial. The garden was easily reached from the western porch or gallery by an inclined path, which had been constructed to save the gouty monarch the pain and fatigue of going up and down stairs. This porch, which was much more spacious than the eastern, was his favorite seat when filled with the warmth of the declining day. Commanding the same view as the cabinet, it looked also upon a small parterre with a fountain in the centre, and a short cypress alley leading to the principal gate of the garden. Beyond this gate and garden was the luxuriant forest; a wide space in front of the convent being covered by the shade of a magnificent walnut tree, even then known as the great walnut tree of Yuste, a Nestor of the woods, which has seen the hermit's cell rise into a royal convent and sink into a ruin, and has survived the Spanish order of Jerome and the Austrian dynasty of Spain." pp. 77 – 78.

The monastery is now in ruins; but Mr. Ford (Handbook for Spain, p. 553) gives a pleasant account of a day which he passed there in 1832, when a few old monks were still sheltered by the falling cloisters.

"When I visited it in 1849," continues Mr. Stirling, "it was inhabited only by the peasant bailiff of the lay proprietor, who eked out his wages by showing the historical site to the passing stranger. The principal cloister was choked with the rubbish of the fallen upper story, the richly-carved capitals which had supported it peeping here and there from the soil and the luxuriant mantle of wild shrubs and flowers. Two sides of the smaller and older cloisters were still standing, with blackened walls and rotting floors and ceilings. The strong granite-built church, proof against the fire of the Gaul and the wintry storms of the Sierra, was a hollow shell; the classical decorations of the altar, and quaint wood-work of the choir, having been partly used for fuel, partly carried off to the parish church of Quacos. Beautiful blue and yellow tiles, which had lined the chancel, were fast dropping from the walls; and above, the window through which the dying glance of Charles had sought the altar, remained, like the eye-socket in a skull, turned towards the damp, blank space that was once bright with holy tapers and the coloring of Titian. In a vault beneath, approached by a door of which the key could not be found, I was told that the coffin of massive chestnut planks, in which the Emperor's body had lain

for sixteen years, was still kept as a relic. In his palace, the lower chambers were used as a magazine for fuel; and in the rooms above, where he had lived and died, maize and olives were gathered, and the silk-worm wound its cocoon in dust and darkness. His garden below, with its tank and broken fountain, was overgrown with tangled thickets of fig, mulberry, and almond, with a few patches of pot-herbs, and here and there an orange tree or a cypress, to mark where once the terrace smiled with its blooming parterres. Without the gate, the great walnut tree, sole relic of the past with which time had not dealt rudely, spread forth its broad and vigorous boughs to shroud and dignify the desolation. Yet, in the lovely face of nature, changeless in its summer charms, in the hill and forest and wide Vera, in the generous soil and genial sky, there was enough to show how well the imperial eagle had chosen the nest wherein to fold his imperial wings." pp. 263 – 264.

Charles arrived at Yuste in February, 1557. In September, 1558, he died there. No one who traces his career down to the former date, will leave it until it terminates at the latter. The pursuits, the feelings, and the opinions of the imperial recluse have been the subject of much idle conjecture, of many absurd falsehoods, and latterly of minute investigation. The reader is familiar with the picture which Robertson has painted of Charles in his retirement. The imperial robe has been thrown aside; royalty and state have altogether vanished. Not the less is dignity still the chief characteristic of the scene. In the gabardine which hangs upon those shoulders where once the purple hung, he who was every inch a king is now every inch a sage. The only feature that does not altogether suit with this conception is a morbid religious feeling, the sole weakness which the Scotch divine of the eighteenth century found it impossible to exalt into a virtue. But he does his best to excuse it — confines it, in defiance of notorious facts, to the last six months of the Emperor's life, when disease had "enfeebled his mind as much as his body," and when "hardly any traces can be discerned of that sound and masculine understanding which distinguished Charles among his contemporaries."

Let us look a little closer at the drawing and the coloring of this distinguished artist. Admire first the soft outlines and mellow tints of the landscape. "It [the convent] was seated

in a vale of no great extent, watered by a small brook, and surrounded by rising grounds, covered with lofty trees." Every reader knows this vale, which lies, not in the province of Estremadura, but in the cockney land of sentimental fiction. The ballad-mongers paint it with a grove at the end, where lovers may meet by moonlight, and whisper the tale that must be told by moonlight alone. It is, in fact, one of the stock properties at the service of every writer of the "picturesque school." It is what the grammarians call an "abstract conception;" as, when the word "horse" is mentioned, the notion conveyed is of a horse without color, and of no particular size. This "vale," with its "rising grounds" and "small brook," bears, we venture to say, no more resemblance to any real valley than Macedon to Monmouth. To none does it bear less resemblance than to the Vera of Plasencia, if there be any truth in the descriptions of travellers, or any credit to be given to the impressions of those who once resided there. In spite of the beauty of the vineyards and pastures, the wide extent of the view, the height of the mountains, the torrents that dash down their precipitous sides, the steep and rugged paths, and the many fearful ravines make sublimity the principal characteristic of the scenery. When Luis Quixada, the faithful steward of the Emperor, first visited Yuste, and saw it under the dreary aspect of a winter sky, he was shocked by its appearance. "I saw nothing," he wrote, "but immense mountains, some of naked rock, others covered with stunted oaks." But this view was obscured by the mists of prejudice, as well as by the fogs of December. The historian Sepulveda, who, on his way across the Sierra, stopped to salute the "setting orb which he had venerated in its noonday glory," noticed, indeed, the extreme beauty of the Vera, but described the "rising grounds" as more lofty, steep, and difficult to climb than the ascent to virtue; and recalled, not without shuddering, the narrow path, "*quæ diu per capita et marginem magnorum præcipitiorum ducit, unde in ima fluenta per celsissimas crepidines et abrupta saxa despectus ipse horrorem nobis incutiebat.*" Mr. Stirling, in the manner of a true artist, paints the approach of Charles to the Vera by "as wild a mountain path as mule ever traversed," and the panorama that at length presented itself to his admiring gaze.

"Overhung, for the most part, with the bare boughs of great oaks and chestnuts, the narrow and slippery track sometimes followed, sometimes crossed torrents, swollen with the late rains, wound beneath toppling crags, climbed the edge of frightful precipices, and reached its culminating horror in the pass of Puertonuevo, a chasm rugged and steep as a broken staircase, which cleft the topmost crest of the Sierra. On this airy height, the traveller, pausing to take breath, suddenly sees the fair Vera unrolled in all its green length, at his feet. Girdled with its mountain wall, this nine-league stretch of pasture and forest, broken here and there with village roofs and convent belfries, slopes gently to the west, where beautiful Plasencia, crowned with cathedral towers, and throned on a terrace of rock, sits, queen-like, amongst vineyards and gardens and the silver windings of the Xerte." pp. 27, 28.

But before proceeding with our comments, let us do Robertson the justice to extract his account of Yuste, and of the Emperor's residence there, in full.

"The building consisted only of six rooms, four of them in the form of friars' cells, with naked walls; the other two, each twenty feet square, were hung with brown cloth, and furnished in the most simple manner. They were all on a level with the ground, with a door on one side into a garden, of which Charles himself had given the plan, and had filled it with various plants, which he intended to cultivate with his own hands. On the other side they communicated with the chapel of the monastery, in which he was to perform his devotions. Into this humble retreat, hardly sufficient for the comfortable accommodation of a private gentleman, did Charles enter, with twelve domestics only. He buried there, in solitude and silence, his grandeur, his ambition, together with all those vast projects, which, during almost half a century, had alarmed and agitated Europe, filling every kingdom in it, by turns, with the terror of his arms, and the dread of being subdued by his power. . . . . When Charles entered this retreat, he formed such a plan of life for himself as would have suited the condition of a private gentleman of a moderate fortune. His table was neat, but plain; his domestics, few; his intercourse with them familiar. All the cumbersome and ceremonious forms of attendance on his person were entirely abolished, as destructive of that social ease and tranquillity which he courted, in order to soothe the remainder of his days. As the mildness of the climate, together with his deliverance from the burdens and cares of government, procured him, at first, a considerable remission from the acute pains with which he had been long tormented, he enjoyed, perhaps, more complete satisfaction, in this

humble solitude, than all his grandeur had ever yielded him. The ambitious thoughts and projects, which had so long engrossed and disquieted him, were quite effaced from his mind. Far from taking any part in the political transactions of the princes of Europe, he restrained his curiosity even from any inquiry concerning them; and he seemed to view the busy scene which he had abandoned with all the contempt and indifference arising from his thorough experience of its vanity, as well as from the pleasing reflection of having disentangled himself from its cares. Other amusements and other objects now occupied him. Sometimes he cultivated the plants in his garden with his own hands; sometimes he rode out to the neighboring wood, on a little horse, the only one that he kept, attended by a single servant, on foot. When his infirmities confined him to his apartment, which often happened, and deprived him of these more active recreations, he either admitted a few gentlemen who resided near the monastery, to visit him, and entertained them familiarly at his table, or he employed himself in studying mechanical principles, and in forming curious works of mechanism, of which he had always been remarkably fond, and to which his genius was peculiarly turned. With this view he had engaged Turriano, one of the most ingenious artists of that age, to accompany him in his retreat. He labored, together with him, in framing models of the most useful machines, as well as in making experiments with regard to their respective powers; and it was not seldom that the ideas of the monarch assisted or perfected the inventions of the artist. He relieved his mind at intervals with slighter and more fantastic works of mechanism; in fashioning puppets, which, by the structure of internal springs, mimicked the gestures and actions of men, to the astonishment of the ignorant monks, who, beholding movements which they could not comprehend, sometimes distrusted their own senses, and sometimes suspected Charles and Turriano of being in compact with invisible powers. He was particularly curious with regard to the construction of clocks and watches; and having found, after repeated trials, that he could not bring any two of them to go exactly alike, he reflected, it is said, with a mixture of surprise as well as regret, on his own folly, in having bestowed so much time and labor on the more vain attempt of bringing mankind to a precise uniformity of sentiment concerning the profound and mysterious doctrines of religion."

We are sorry to say that the errors, in this passage, are more numerous than the sentences. The rooms were not six in number, but eight; they were not all on one floor, and those of Charles were in the second story. The furniture was

handsome, and the dark cloth, instead of arras, in the imperial chamber, was a matter of taste, not of affected simplicity. The number of the servants was not twelve, but sixty, some of whom found lodgings in the convent, while others, whose personal attendance was unnecessary, took up their abode in a neighboring village. Of the table and the ceremony we shall speak hereafter — merely remarking here, that, so far from Charles familiarly entertaining any of his neighbors at his own table, it was thought an extraordinary mark of favor when he ordered a dish to be carried from it to the apartment of one of his most distinguished visitors. The Emperor was not accustomed to ride his little horse. He once mounted it, Sandoval tells us, but being seized with a dizziness, was immediately lifted off, and never renewed the attempt. "The useful machines," constructed by Turriano, were hand-mills for grinding wheat; and the profound reflection upon the folly of persecution, — wholly inconsistent with the sentiments often expressed by the Emperor at Yuste, and with the terms of a codicil to his will, executed a few days before his death, which Robertson had before his eyes, — is not mentioned by any writer of credit, and was probably picked by the historian out of some book of *ana*, such as are strung together by gentlemen of an epigrammatic turn.

Most of these errors are individually of little importance; nor do we mean to assert that they are all downright blunders of Robertson. But they are proofs of negligence, and of want of proper research and comparison of authorities. The great mistake is that which runs through the whole passage. The general effect is false. The life of Charles at Yuste, his habits and his thoughts, were very different from what is here described. He was not more of a philosopher, not more indifferent about what was passing in the world, not more calm and dispassionate in his reflections, not more simple in his tastes or moderate in his appetites, than he had always been. No doubt, particular expressions might be picked out of the Spanish chroniclers, which would accord with the representations of the Scotch historian. But in studying that class of writers, it is not to their general statements that any weight is to be given; these are usually to be

rejected as mere ornaments, in the carving of which fancy had the greater share of the labor. The details which they give of particular transactions are what constitute the value of the chronicles; and if, on a critical examination, many errors be detected, we shall generally discover a truthful intention. There were works in Robertson's hands, or within his reach, containing many particulars which showed that Charles, while at Yuste, took an interest in public affairs; that he transacted important business with agents of the government; that he regarded the progress of the Reformation in a spirit of fierce intolerance; and that he expressed himself, on that and on other topics, in language characterized neither by moderation nor refinement. But these were facts that did not harmonize with the preconceptions of the historian, and he therefore passed them by unnoticed. Having dipped into Sandoval and Vera only to extract one or two erroneous statements, that tallied with his own erroneous idea, he abandoned those respectable authorities, for the loose statements and vapid declamation of De Thou, and the still more elaborate embellishments of the notorious Gregorio Leti. It was not enough that, under the influence of disease, constitutional melancholy, premature old age, disappointed ambition, and a complication of political difficulties that demanded exertions of which he was no longer capable, Charles resigned his crown, withdrew from the control of affairs, and retired from scenes where to exist was to be active, and where, if active, he must still have been supreme. We know how great must be the contrast between the condition of a prince on the throne and that of a prince who has abdicated. In Charles's case, so much had his activity diminished before his resignation, and so great was his interest, and even his participation, in the conduct of the government after that event, that we find the contrast less striking than might have been expected. But Robertson paints it in glowing colors. He heightens it by every possible misrepresentation and omission; and the very art with which he does this, is the strongest evidence against him. The skill with which he selects the errors of truthful writers, and avoids whatever particles of truth he finds in dishonest writers, precludes the plea of ignorance, and convicts him of design. A

great "conqueror," whose ambition had been "insatiable," quitting the world that he may find time for serious meditation, and looking back upon the scene he had left only to smile at its vanities, and to wonder that he could ever have been their dupe, — such is the picturesque conception to which the historian has sacrificed — Truth. Thus it is that, instead of the few grains of fact which it is possible for the historic sieve to retain, of all that Time pours into it, we are presented with elegant chaff, in full measures, which the respectable public carefully grinds, kneads, swallows, and with much facility digests.

If a thorough examination of the authorities whom Robertson consulted would always have provoked doubts of his accuracy, testimony has lately been brought forward which leaves him without the shadow of a case. There exist in the Archives of Simancas many letters written during the Emperor's residence at Yuste, by himself and by various members of his household, to Philip, to the Regent Juana, and to Vazquez de Molina, the secretary of the council of Castile. From these documents Tomas Gonzalez, who was keeper of the archives in the reign of Ferdinand VII., drew up an elaborate paper, which he probably intended for publication in the Memoirs of the Royal Academy of History. This intention was frustrated by his death; and his brother, who came into possession of the MS., instead of printing, offered it for sale to several public libraries and wealthy *literateurs* for the modest sum of 15,000 francs. At this price it was declined — among others, by the eminent American historian, Mr. Prescott, who was then engaged in collecting the materials for his History of Philip II., and who has since succeeded in obtaining from Simancas full copies of all important portions of the correspondence. Manuel Gonzalez, being at length obliged to lower his terms, sold the Memoir, in 1844, to the directors of the *Archives des Étrangers*, for 4,000 francs. The successive changes of government in France have delayed the publication of the MS., but the nature of its contents has long been known to scholars who have taken an interest in the subject. Last year, permission to inspect the Memoir was obtained by Mr. Stirling, who is favorably known as the

author of a graceful account of Spanish art and artists. That gentleman had previously made himself acquainted with all printed matter relating to the subject, and had contributed to "Frazer's Magazine" an account of the latter days of Charles, in which his greater industry and truthfulness had enabled him to shun the rocks upon which Robertson had run. He has now recast this article, with large additions, and has embodied in it the substance of the MS. of Gonzalez. We know of but one reason why the work should not be reprinted here; and as that objection applies equally to the republication of all foreign works, and has not, in any instance that we know of, prevented such publication, we trust that the Messrs. Harper will not allow the want of an international copyright, and the consequent impossibility of making a proper remuneration to the author, to deter them from putting forth an edition of the Cloister Life of Charles V. As the volume contains every thing in regard to the subject which the most curious reader can desire, we shall close our sketch of the Emperor's career with a brief account of his *dichos y hechos* in the convent.

Instead of a mode of life suited to "the condition of a private gentleman of a moderate fortune," the etiquette of a royal household was sedulously maintained at Yuste. Charles always ate alone; he was served and addressed upon the knee, and was addressed as Emperor by all who approached him as well as by his correspondents. In fact, any change in this respect could have proceeded only from affectation, and would have produced only embarrassment. It is no relief for persons accustomed from their birth to ceremonious observances, to adopt the common manners of social life. Charles and his former subjects would have felt a greater restraint in omitting, than they did in retaining, the forms to which they were accustomed. If there be sometimes an Arbaces, who is overjoyed to be "found no king," it is seldom that a Bessus takes him at his word, and greets him on the instant as "fellow-subject." How far the Emperor was from foregoing, in the convent, the luxuries by which he had been surrounded in the palace, may be seen by the list of his attendants and the inventory of his effects. In the former we find enumerated a

mayor-domo, a keeper of the wardrobe, a secretary, a physician, two apothecaries, and eight gentlemen of the bedchamber, besides cooks, brewers, and other inferior domestics. In the latter, we have "tapestries of gold, silver, and silk;" "robes lined with eider-down, ermine, Tunis kidskin, and velvet;" "an arm-chair with six cushions and a foot-stool;" costly works of art, such as pictures by Titian, and vases by Cellini; knick-knacks and articles of *virtù*, as "a piece of the true cross," and "eighteen files to file his majesty's teeth with;" and more than 13,000 ounces of plate, including "cups, basins, jugs, bottles, pitchers, candlesticks, warming-pans," and other meaner utensils of the imperial chamber.

Nor was there any falling-off in the more substantial luxuries and comforts which Charles prized above all others. One might almost suspect that he retired from the world only that he might indulge, unnoticed and uncensured, in the delights of the table. Salmon, tunny, anchovies, eels, and frogs (especially the last), were still among his frequent and favorite dishes; and while he did not neglect the juice of the grape, his customary beverage was iced strong beer. One of his last occupations was stocking a trout pond, and one of his last appointments that of an additional gamekeeper. Scarcely any degree of suffering could limit his appetite; a frogless world was no world for him; and as, by his gormandizing, he had disabled himself for the active business of life, so now, by the same means, he exhausted the small stock of vigor which he had gained in the beginning of his residence in the most salubrious part of Spain.

But if Charles was thus assiduous in the gratification of sense, it must not be supposed that he forgot the still higher claims of religion. He knew there was a purgatory to come; and he was constant in the performance of all those expiatory rites, which were to shorten its pains and hasten his passage to a scene where enjoyment has no satiety and conscience no pangs. His devotions were as long and as frequent as his meals. "*Dalla messa alla mensa*," had always been his rule; and eating and praying, sometimes separate, and sometimes united, now absorbed the greater portion of the day. Every morning the confessor and the capon were simultaneous in

their appearance at his bedside. Mass followed hard upon the morning repast. Dinner was digested under the soothing influence of a sermon. At short intervals, the account of his penances and his peccadilloes was balanced by Father Regla, and a clean sheet prepared for the next entries. In times of ecclesiastical humiliation, Charles bared his wasted shoulders, and, with a knotted whip, extorted some drops of watery blood. One sin, to which we have already alluded, weighed heavily upon his soul — the good faith which he had kept with Luther. It had long been apparent that his temporizing course, in regard to the Reformation, was a political blunder; hence the sackcloth and ashes in which it was bewailed. There could not be a greater mistake than to suppose that Charles, in the last years of life, learned to view religious differences with a tolerant eye. His chief regret was, that he had not persecuted earlier and persecuted more. He was staking his own chance of salvation upon a discipline of external rites and blind submission; and the bigotry that naturally followed was deepened by political hatred and the bitter consciousness of defeat. When informed that heresy had been discovered in Seville, he raged like an inquisitor. He would have gone himself to investigate the "black business," had he not been chained fast by an access of disease. He charged Philip, by letter, to spare no pains in extirpating the evil. He expressed his satisfaction when he heard that men, whom he had once known and esteemed, were consigned to the dungeons of the Inquisition. It is well known to the student of ecclesiastical history that, in February, 1559, an edict was issued in Spain, which declared that recantation should no longer avail to save the life of a convicted heretic, but only to obtain for him the grace of a swifter kind of death. The proposal for this alteration of the law emanated from the imperial recluse at Yuste. To let such offenders escape, he said, only made them disaffected subjects, and tempted others into the same path; and he pointed triumphantly to his own edicts in the Netherlands — than which none, certainly, could be more barbarous, but none, happily, more ineffectual. The codicil, which about this time he added to his will, breathes the same persecuting spirit.

In fact, moderation of thought or speech, in regard to any subject, was no characteristic of Charles in his retirement. He could no longer act; so much the more strongly did he feel, so much the more vehemently did he express himself, in regard to the public transactions of that eventful time. He maintained a correspondence both with his successor and with the regent, and received reports of all that was passing on the stage which he had left. As the king was absent from Spain, he watched, with especial interest, the internal affairs of that country. He aided Juana with his counsel; and, on more than one occasion, when Philip sent urgent demands for money to assist him in carrying on the war, Charles pressed the matter forward by his earnest exhortations, and expostulated with the clergy, whom he saw unwilling to loosen their purse-strings. Whenever despatches from Flanders were read to him, he asked eagerly if there were not more. Messengers from the seat of war were plied with questions respecting the condition of the army, down to the minutest details. Charles's comments on what was done, whether in the camp or in the cabinet, were expressed, not merely with freedom, but with asperity and violence. Sometimes he was too indignant to speak at all, and would not even listen to an account of measures which he had condemned, lest he should be choked by his rage. On one occasion, when, on the arrival of the treasure-fleet from America, the merchants of Seville, either by force or connivance, had managed to get their share of the cargo out of the hands of the government officials, the anger of the Emperor passed all bounds. He demanded that the members of the *Casa de la Contratacion* — a board that regulated the American trade — should be seized, thrown into dungeons, loaded with chains, and tortured, and their goods confiscated, — and all this without any trial; for he knew, he said, that the judge appointed to investigate the matter would only be bribed into connivance. His denunciations extended to the whole government. "It is in vain for you to attempt to excuse yourself," he wrote to the secretary Vazquez; "you *must* have been in fault." The regent herself barely escaped. "I know, daughter," he somewhat ungraciously concludes one of his most angry epistles, "that you are not to blame; it is your advisers whom I accuse."

We may suspect, that Philip's officials would have been better pleased to have been exempt from the strictures of a critic, who was the more severe, as his view was from a distance, and his mind soured by mortification and disease. Charles censured the conduct of the Duke of Alva, when that general was in the full tide of a successful campaign; and condemned the peace which he made, insinuating even that corruption was at the bottom of it, although Alva was himself, in fact, disgusted with the terms, and subscribed them only at the king's express command.

In this picture of disappointment, peevishness, virulence, disease, gross appetite, as gross a creed, trivial amusements, forgetfulness of friends, implacable recollection of enemies, — we find few redeeming features. There was nothing sour or repulsive in Charles's manners, but neither was there any warmth or strength in his affections. He is said to have been much moved by the death of his sister, Eleanor of France; but it would be difficult to find proofs that he showed any tenderness for her while alive. She had been a meek sacrifice to his ambition. He refused to allow her and Mary of Hungary to pass a night at Yuste, when they visited him there. In his last moments, his daughter requested permission to come to him from Valladolid; but he preferred to meet death surrounded by priests and domestics. The only fine moral quality which he seems to have possessed was a love of art, and especially of music, with which he had a scientific acquaintance, as far as the science existed in that day. The choir at Yuste had been selected with especial reference to the requirements of his fastidious ear; and it is said, that if, during the celebration of divine service, some rustic auditor, carried away by devotional feeling, mingled his untrained notes with the melodious strains of the more cultivated performers, an imprecation of the least refined description would be hissed out from between the imperial teeth. In consideration of this trait, many sins may be pardoned — by the critic.

But let us hasten to the close. It was on the 31st of August, 1558, that Charles was attacked by his last illness. On the day before, he had caused funeral rites to be celebrated,

in anticipation of his death, and had joined in the performance of his own obsequies. While engaged in this strange ceremony, a sudden chill is supposed to have struck him, and an attack of fever was the immediate consequence. The doctor spoke encouragingly; but Quixada, who had been his faithful attendant for thirty years, knew there was no hope; — the patient had lost his appetite. Minute accounts of his state were sent every day, by members of his household, to the court at Valladolid; and many of these we have had an opportunity of perusing at length. The *mayordomo* records many of the expressions that fell from his master's lips, and exhibits the fluttering of hope and fear among his anxious attendants; the confessor relates his pious preparations; the physician numbers his eructations. Propped upon his "two beds and thirty-six bolsters," Charles waited the signal for his last battle. He was not afraid to die — few men are. Those whose lives have been most selfish, and whose consciences are least sensitive, have the slenderest ties to this life, and the weakest apprehensions in regard to the next. Whatever may have been Charles's faults, however shallow his repentance, he had a courageous soul; and he received all the comforts of a religion which knows best how to comfort such a mind. Holy tapers and images were brought from Montserrate, to be placed in his hands at the last moment. A crucifix, of peculiar virtue, which had comforted the Empress Isabella in her last moments, was held in readiness to meet the expiring gaze of her lord. Archbishop Carranza was summoned from Toledo, to perform that solemn rite which is the last act of courtesy from the Church to the guest that is leaving her portals on his journey to a distant and an unknown land. On the 19th, Charles received extreme unction; on the 20th, he requested the eucharist. "I have a long way to go," he said, "and it is best to be well provided." On the 21st, at midnight, the summons came. All who could obtain admission, hurried to the scene. Image, crucifix, and taper were placed as the dying man desired. "*Ya es tiempo!*" he exclaimed — "Now it is time." At once a convulsive agony seized upon his frame; wrenched from him a loud cry of "*Ay Jesus!*" — so

loud that it was heard in the adjoining rooms; — then passed, and left

" Imperial Cæsar, dead, and turned to clay."

ART. III. — 1. *Études Biographiques sur la Révolution d'Angleterre.* Par M. GUIZOT. Paris: Didier, Libraire-Editeur. 1851. 8vo. pp. 373.

2. *Footsteps of our Forefathers: what they suffered and what they sought; describing Localities and portraying Personages and Events conspicuous in the Struggles for Religious Liberty.* By JAMES G. MIALL. Boston: Gould & Lincoln. 1852. 12mo. pp. 352.

THE period of the English Revolution, including the experiment of the Protectorate, possesses the highest interest for all students of history, and for those active politicians who would consider the philosophy of change, and regulate the policy of nations. This is shown, both by the great number of writers who have engaged on both sides of the question, and by the acrimony with which they have discussed it, — coloring recorded facts with the hues of their theories or prejudices. For the last sixty years, the argument, instead of growing pale with age, has received fresh importance from the tenor of French history during that time. The historic parallel thus set forth elicited fresh inquiry; and, in England, the free spirit of the time was led to question, more decidedly, the conclusions of the philosophic Jacobite, David Hume, who had almost become the classic authority on the subject during the Tory reign of George III. The temporary remission of the Whig spirit, on the fall of the great Earl of Chatham before the strength of Toryism, left the pendulum of English opinion to be swayed in the direction of the Stuart cause and the prerogative of kings. But with later thinkers, and particularly with Carlyle, it has been tending the other way, and we have been called on to do homage to Oliver Cromwell, as one of the first and most heroic of Englishmen. All this